

PERSONS REPRESENTED:

OEDIPUS
A PRIEST
CREON
TEIRESIAS
IOCASTE
MESSENGER
SHEPHERD OF LAIOS
SECOND MESSENGER
CHORUS OF THEBAN ELDERS

THE SCENE. Before the palace of Oedipus, King of Thebes. A central door and two lateral doors open onto a platform which runs the length of the façade. On the platform, right and left, are altars; and three steps lead down into the "orchestra," or chorus-ground. At the beginning of the action these steps are crowded by suppliants who have brought branches and chaplets of olive leaves and who lie in various attitudes of despair. OEDIPUS enters.

§ PROLOGUE

OEDIPUS:

My children, generations of the living
In the line of Kadmos, nursed at his ancient hearth:
Why have you strewn yourselves before these altars
In supplication, with your boughs and garlands?
The breath of incense rises from the city;
With a sound of prayer and lamentation.

§ Oedipus Rex

AN ENGLISH VERSION
BY DUDLEY FITTS AND ROBERT FITZGERALD

PROLOGUE	[Oedipus, Suppliants, Priest, Creon]	3
PARADOS	[Chorus]	10
SCENE I	[Oedipus, Choragos, Teiresias]	12
ODE I	[Chorus]	24
SCENE II	[Creon, Choragos, Oedipus, Iocaste]	25
ODE II	[Chorus]	44
SCENE III	[Iocaste, Messenger, Oedipus, Choragos]	45
ODE III	[Chorus]	56
SCENE IV	[Oedipus, Choragos, Messenger, Shepherd]	57
ODE IV	[Chorus]	63
EXODOS	[Second Messenger, Choragos, Oedipus, Creon, Antigone, Ismene]	65

4 OEDIPUS REX

Children,
I would not have you speak through messengers,
And therefore I have come myself to hear you—
I, Oedipus, who bear the famous name.

[To a priest:]

You, there, since you are eldest in the company,
Speak for them all, tell me what preys upon you,
Whether you come in dread, or crave some blessing:
Tell me, and never doubt that I will help you
In every way I can; I should be heartless
Were I not moved to find you suppliant here.

PRIEST:

Great Oedipus, O powerful King of Thebes
You see how all the ages of our people
Cling to your altar steps: here are boys
Who can barely stand alone, and here are priests
By weight of age, as I am a priest of God,
And young men chosen from those yet unmarried;
As for the others, all that multitude,
They wait with olive chaplets in the squares,
At the two shrines of Pallas, and where Apollo
Speaks in the glowing embers.

Your own eyes

Must tell you: Thebes is tossed on a murdering sea
And can not lift her head from the death surge.
A rust consumes the buds and fruits of the earth;
The herds are sick; children die unborn,
And labor is vain. The god of plague and pyre
Raids like detestable lightning through the city,
And all the house of Kadmos is laid waste,
All emptied, and all darkened: Death alone
Battens upon the misery of Thebes.

You are not one of the immortal gods, we know;
Yet we have come to you to make our prayer
As to the man surest in mortal ways

And wisest in the ways of God. You saved us
From the Sphinx, that flinty singer, and the tribute
We paid to her so long; yet you were never
Better informed than we, nor could we teach you:
It was some god breathed in you to set us free.

Therefore, O mighty King, we turn to you:
Find us our safety, find us a remedy,
Whether by counsel of the gods or men.
A king of wisdom tested in the past
Can act in a time of troubles, and act well.
Noblest of men, restore
Life to your city! Think how all men call you
Liberator for your triumph long ago;
Ah, when your years of kingship are remembered,
Let them not say *We rose, but later fell*—
Keep the State from going down in the storm!
Once, years ago, with happy augury,
You brought us fortune; be the same again!
No man questions your power to rule the land:
But rule over men, not over a dead city!
Ships are only hulls, citadels are nothing,
When no life moves in the empty passageways.

OEDIPUS:

Poor children! You may be sure I know
All that you longed for in your coming here.
I know that you are deathly sick; and yet,
Sick as you are, not one is as sick as I.
Each of you suffers in himself alone
His anguish, not another's; but my spirit
Groans for the city, for myself, for you.

I was not sleeping, you are not waking me.
No, I have been in tears for a long while
And in my restless thought walked many ways.
In all my search, I found one helpful course,

And that I have taken: I have sent Creon,
 Son of Menoikeus, brother of the Queen,
 To Delphi, Apollo's place of revelation,
 To learn there, if he can,
 What act or pledge of mine may save the city.
 I have counted the days, and now, this very day,
 I am troubled, for he has overstayed his time.
 What is he doing? He has been gone too long.
 Yet whenever he comes back, I should do ill
 To scant whatever duty God reveals.

PRIEST:

It is a timely promise. At this instant
 They tell me Creon is here.

OEDIPUS:

O Lord Apollo!
 May his news be fair as his face is radiant!

PRIEST:

It could not be otherwise: he is crowned with bay,
 The chaplet is thick with berries.

OEDIPUS:

We shall soon know;
 He is near enough to hear us now.

[Enter CREON
 O Prince:

Brother: son of Menoikeus:
 What answer do you bring us from the gods?

CREON:

A strong one. I can tell you, great afflictions
 Will turn out well, if they are taken well.

OEDIPUS:

What was the oracle? These vague words
 Leave me still hanging between hope and fear.

CREON:

Is it your pleasure to hear me with all these
 Gathered around us? I am prepared to speak,
 But should we not go in?

OEDIPUS:

Let them all hear it.
 It is for them I suffer, more than for myself.

CREON:

Then I will tell you what I heard at Delphi.

In plain words

The god commands us to expel from the land of
 Thebes

An old defilement we are sheltering.

It is a deadly thing, beyond cure;

We must not let it feed upon us longer.

OEDIPUS:

What defilement? How shall we rid ourselves of it?

CREON:

By exile or death, blood for blood. It was

Murder that brought the plague-wind on the city.

OEDIPUS:

Murder of whom? Surely the god has named him?

CREON:

My lord: long ago Laios was our king,

Before you came to govern us.

OEDIPUS:

I know,
 I learned of him from others; I never saw him.

8 OEDIPUS REX

OEDIPUS:

Strange, that a highwayman should be so daring—
Unless some faction here bribed him to do it.

CREON:

We thought of that. But after Laios' death
New troubles arose and we had no avenger.

OEDIPUS:

What troubles could prevent your hunting down the
killers?

CREON:

The riddling Sphinx's song
Made us deaf to all mysteries but her own.

OEDIPUS:

Then once more I must bring what is dark to light.
It is most fitting that Apollo shows,
As you do, this compunction for the dead.
You shall see how I stand by you, as I should,
To avenge the city and the city's god,
And not as though it were for some distant friend,
But for my own sake, to be rid of evil.
Whoever killed King Laios might—who knows?—
Decide at any moment to kill me as well.
By avenging the murdered king I protect myself.

Come, then, my children: leave the altar steps,
Lift up your olive boughs!

One of you go

And summon the people of Kadmos to gather here.
I will do all that I can; you may tell them that.

[Exit a PAGE

So, with the help of God,
We shall be saved—or else indeed we are lost.

CREON:

He was murdered; and Apollo commands us now
To take revenge upon whoever killed him.

OEDIPUS:

Upon whom? Where are they? Where shall we find a
clue

To solve that crime, after so many years?

CREON:

Here in this land, he said.

If we make enquiry,
We may touch things that otherwise escape us.

OEDIPUS:

Tell me: Was Laios murdered in his house,
Or in the fields, or in some foreign country?

CREON:

He said he planned to make a pilgrimage.
He did not come home again.

OEDIPUS:

And was there no one,
No witness, no companion, to tell what happened?

CREON:

They were all killed but one, and he got away
So frightened that he could remember one thing only.

OEDIPUS:

What was that one thing? One may be the key
To everything, if we resolve to use it.

CREON:

He said that a band of highwaymen attacked them,
Outnumbered them, and overwhelmed the King.

10 OEDIPUS REX

PARODOS 11

PRIEST:

Let us rise, children. It was for this we came,
And now the King has promised it himself.
Phoibos has sent us an oracle; may he descend
Himself to save us and drive out the plague.

[Exit OEDIPUS and CROTON into the palace by the central door. The PRIEST and the SUPPLIANTS disperse R and L. After a short pause the CHORUS enters the orchestra.]

9 PARODOS

CHORUS:

What is God singing in his profound
Delphi of gold and shadow?
What oracle for Thebes, the sunwhipped city?
[STROPHE 1

Fear unjoins me, the roots of my heart tremble.

Now I remember, O Healer, your power, and wonder:
Will you send doom like a sudden cloud, or weave it
Like nightfall of the past?

Speak, speak to us, issue of holy sound:
Dearest to our expectancy: be tender!

Let me pray to Athena, the immortal daughter of
Zeus,
And to Artemis her sister
Who keeps her famous throne in the market ring,
[ANTISTROPHE 1

And to Apollo, bowman at the far butts of heaven—
O gods, descend! Like three streams leap against
The fires of our grief, the fires of darkness;
Be swift to bring us rest!

As in the old time from the brilliant house
Of air you stepped to save us, come again!

Now our afflictions have no end, [STROPHE 2
Now all our stricken host lies down
And no man fights off death with his mind;

The noble plowland bears no grain,
And groaning mothers can not bear—

See, how our lives like birds take wing,
Like sparks that fly when a fire soars,
To the shore of the god of evening.

The plague burns on, it is pitiless, [ANTISTROPHE 2
Though pallid children laden with death
Lie unwept in the stony ways,

And old gray women by every path
Flock to the strand about the altars

There to strike their breasts and cry
Worship of Phoibos in wailing prayers:
Be kind, God's golden child!

There are no swords in this attack by fire, [STROPHE 3
No shields, but we are ringed with cries.

Send the besieger plunging from our homes
 Into the vast sea-room of the Atlantic
 Or into the waves that foam eastward of Thrace—

For the day ravages what the night spares—

Destroy our enemy, lord of the thunder!
 Let him be riven by lightning from heaven!

[ANTISTROPHES 3

Phoibos Apollo, stretch the sun's bowstring,
 That golden cord, until it sing for us,
 Flashing arrows in heaven!

Artemis, Huntress,
 Race with flaring lights upon our mountains!

O scarlet god, O golden-banded brow,

O Theban Bacchos in a storm of Maenads,

[Enter OEDIPUS, C.

Whirl upon Death, that all the Undying hate!
 Come with blinding torches, come in joy!

SCENE I

OEDIPUS:

Is this your prayer? It may be answered. Come,
 Listen to me, act as the crisis demands,
 And you shall have relief from all these evils.

Until now I was a stranger to this tale,
 As I had been a stranger to the crime.
 Could I track down the murderer without a clue?
 But now, friends,
 As one who became a citizen after the murder,
 I make this proclamation to all Thebans:

If any man knows by whose hand Laios, son of Labdakos,
 Met his death, I direct that man to tell me everything,
 No matter what he fears for having so long withheld it.

Let it stand as promised that no further trouble
 Will come to him, but he may leave the land in
 safety.

Moreover: If anyone knows the murderer to be foreign,
 Let him not keep silent: he shall have his reward from
 me.

However, if he does conceal it; if any man
 Fearing for his friend or for himself disobeys this
 edict,

Hear what I propose to do:

I solemnly forbid the people of this country,
 Where power and throne are mine, ever to receive
 that man

Or speak to him, no matter who he is, or let him
 Join in sacrifice, lustration, or in prayer.

I decree that he be driven from every house,
 Being, as he is, corruption itself to us: the Delphic
 Voice of Zeus has pronounced this revelation.

Thus I associate myself with the oracle
 And take the side of the murdered king.

As for the criminal, I pray to God—
 Whether it be a lurking thief, or one of a number—
 I pray that that man's life be consumed in evil and
 wretchedness.

And as for me, this curse applies no less
 If it should turn out that the culprit is my guest here,
 Sharing my hearth. You have heard the penalty.

I lay it on you now to attend to this
 For my sake, for Apollo's, for the sick
 Sterile city that heaven has abandoned.
 Suppose the oracle had given you no command:
 Should this defilement go uncleansed for ever?
 You should have found the murderer: your king,
 A noble king, had been destroyed!

Now I,

Having the power that he held before me,
 Having his bed, begetting children there
 Upon his wife, as he would have, had he lived—
 Their son would have been my children's brother,
 If Laios had had luck in fatherhood!
 (But surely ill luck rushed upon his reign)—
 I say I take the son's part, just as though
 I were his son, to press the fight for him
 And see it won! I'll find the hand that brought
 Death to Labdakos' and Polydoros' child,
 Heir of Kadmos' and Agenor's line.
 And as for those who fall me,
 May the gods deny them the fruit of the earth,
 Fruit of the womb, and may they rot utterly!
 Let them be wretched as we are wretched, and worse!

For you, for loyal Thebans, and for all
 Who find my actions right, I pray the favor
 Of justice, and of all the immortal gods.

CHORACOS:

Since I am under oath, my lord, I swear
 I did not do the murder, I can not name
 The murderer. Might not the oracle
 That has ordained the search tell where to find him?

OEDIPUS:

An honest question. But no man in the world
 Can make the gods do more than the gods will.

CHORACOS:

There is one last expedient—

OEDIPUS:

Tell me what it is.
 Though it seem slight, you must not hold it back.

CHORACOS:

A lord clairvoyant to the lord Apollo,
 As we all know, is the skilled Teiresias.
 One might learn much about this from him, Oedipus.

OEDIPUS:

I am not wasting time:
 Creon spoke of this, and I have sent for him—
 Twice, in fact; it is strange that he is not here.

CHORACOS:

The other matter—that old report—seems useless.

OEDIPUS:

Tell me. I am interested in all reports.

CHORACOS:

The King was said to have been killed by highway-
 men.

OEDIPUS:

I know. But we have no witnesses to that.

CHORACOS:

If the killer can feel a particle of dread,
 Your curse will bring him out of hiding!

OEDIPUS:

No.
 The man who dared that act will fear no curse.
 [Enter the blind seer TEIRESIAS, led by a PAGE

16 OEDIPUS REX

CHORACOS:

But there is one man who may detect the criminal.
This is Teiresias, this is the holy prophet
In whom, alone of all men, truth was born.

OEDIPUS:

Teiresias: seer: student of mysteries,
Of all that's taught and all that no man tells,
Secrets of Heaven and secrets of the earth;
Blind though you are, you know the city lies
Sick with plague; and from this plague, my lord,
We find that you alone can guard or save us.

Possibly you did not hear the messengers?
Apollo, when we sent to him,
Sent us back word that this great pestilence
Would lift, but only if we established clearly
The identity of those who murdered Laios.
They must be killed or exiled.

Can you use
Birdflight or any art of divination
To purify yourself, and Thebes, and me
From this contagion? We are in your hands.
There is no fairer duty
Than that of helping others in distress.

TEIRESIAS:

I know dreadful knowledge of the truth can be
When there's no help in truth! I knew this well,
But made myself forget. I should not have come.

OEDIPUS:

What is troubling you? Why are your eyes so cold?

TEIRESIAS:

Let me go home. Bear your own fate, and I'll
Bear mine. It is better so: trust what I say.

OEDIPUS:

What you say is ungracious and unhelpful
To your native country. Do not refuse to speak.

TEIRESIAS:

When it comes to speech, your own is neither tem-
perate

Nor opportune. I wish to be more prudent.

OEDIPUS:

In God's name, we all beg you—

TEIRESIAS:

You are all ignorant.

No; I will never tell you what I know.

Now it is my misery; then, it would be yours.

OEDIPUS:

What! You do know something, and will not tell us?
You would betray us all and wreck the State?

TEIRESIAS:

I do not intend to torture myself, or you.

Why persist in asking? You will not persuade me.

OEDIPUS:

What a wicked old man you are! You'd try a stone's
Patience! Out with it! Have you no feeling at all?

TEIRESIAS:

You call me unfeeling. If you could only see
The nature of your own feelings . . .

OEDIPUS:

Why,

Who would not feel as I do? Who could endure
Your arrogance toward the city?

TEIRESIAS:

What does it matter!
Whether I speak or not, it is bound to come.

OEDIPUS:

'Then, if "it" is bound to come, you are bound to
tell me.

TEIRESIAS:

No, I will not go on. Rage as you please.

OEDIPUS:

Rage? Why not!
And I'll tell you what I think:
You planned it, you had it done, you all but
killed him with your own hands: if you had eyes,
I'd say the crime was yours, and yours alone.

TEIRESIAS:

So? I charge you, then,
Abide by the proclamation you have made:
From this day forth
Never speak again to these men or to me;
You yourself are the pollution of this country.

OEDIPUS:

You dare say that! Can you possibly think you have
Some way of going free, after such insolence?

TEIRESIAS:

I have gone free. It is the truth sustains me.

OEDIPUS:

Who taught you shamelessness? It was not your craft.

TEIRESIAS:

You did. You made me speak. I did not want to.

OEDIPUS:

Speak what? Let me hear it again more clearly.

TEIRESIAS:

Was it not clear before? Are you tempting me?

OEDIPUS:

I did not understand it. Say it again.

TEIRESIAS:

I say that you are the murderer whom you seek.

OEDIPUS:

Now twice you have spat out infamy. You'll pay for
it!

TEIRESIAS:

Would you care for more? Do you wish to be really
angry?

OEDIPUS:

Say what you will. Whatever you say is worthless,

TEIRESIAS:

I say you live in hideous shame with those
Most dear to you. You can not see the evil.

OEDIPUS:

It seems you can go on mouthing like this for ever.

TEIRESIAS:

I can, if there is power in truth.

OEDIPUS:

There is:
But not for you, not for you,
You sightless, witless, senseless, mad old man!

20 OEDIPUS REX

TEIRESIAS:

You are the madman. There is no one here
Who will not curse you soon, as you curse me.

OEDIPUS:

You child of endless night! You can not hurt me
Or any other man who sees the sun.

TEIRESIAS:

True: it is not from me your fate will come,
That lies within Apollo's competence,
As it is his concern.

OEDIPUS:

Tell me:
Are you speaking for Creon, or for yourself?

TEIRESIAS:

Creon is no threat. You weave your own doom.

OEDIPUS:

Wealth, power, craft of statesmanship!
Kingly position, everywhere admired!
What savage envy is stored up against these,
If Creon, whom I trusted, Creon my friend,
For this great office which the city once
Put in my hands unsought—if for this power
Creon desires in secret to destroy me!

He has bought this decrepit fortune-teller, this
Collector of dirty pennies, this prophet fraud—
Why, he is no more clairvoyant than I am!

Tell us:

Has your mystic mummery ever approached the truth?
When that helcat the Sphinx was performing here,
What help were you to these people?

Her magic was not for the first man who came along:
It demanded a real exorcist. Your birds—
What good were they? or the gods, for the matter of
that?

But I came by.
Oedipus, the simple man, who knows nothing—
I thought it out for myself, no birds helped me!
And this is the man you think you can destroy.
That you may be close to Creon when he's king!
Well, you and your friend Creon, it seems to me,
Will suffer most. If you were not an old man,
You would have paid already for your plot.

CHOROS:

We can not see that his words or yours
Have been spoken except in anger, Oedipus,
And of anger we have no need. How can God's will
Be accomplished best? That is what most concerns
us.

TEIRESIAS:

You are a king. But where argument's concerned
I am your man, as much a king as you.
I am not your servant, but Apollo's.
I have no need of Creon to speak for me.

Listen to me. You mock my blindness, do you?
But I say that you, with both your eyes, are blind:
You can not see the wretchedness of your life,
Nor in whose house you live, no, not with whom.
Who are your father and mother? Can you tell me?
You do not even know the blind wrongs
That you have done them, on earth and in the world
below.
But the double lash of your parents' curse will whip
you
Out of this land some day, with only night

TEIRESIAS:
 Upon your precious eyes.
 Your cries then—where will they not be heard?
 What fastness of Kithairon will not echo them?
 And that bridal-descant of yours—you'll know it then,
 The song they sang when you came here to Thebes
 And found your misguided berthing.
 All this, and more, that you can not guess at now,
 Will bring you to yourself among your children.

OEDIPUS:
 Be angry, then. Curse Creon. Curse my words.
 I tell you, no man that walks upon the earth
 Shall be rooted out more horribly than you.

OEDIPUS:
 Am I to bear this from him?—Damnation
 Take you! Out of this place! Out of my sight!

TEIRESIAS:
 I would not have come at all if you had not asked me.

OEDIPUS:
 Could I have told that you'd talk nonsense, that
 You'd come here to make a fool of yourself, and of
 me?

TEIRESIAS:
 A fool? Your parents thought me sane enough.

OEDIPUS:
 My parents again!—Wait: who were my parents?

TEIRESIAS:
 This day will give you a father, and break your heart.

OEDIPUS:
 Your infantile riddles! Your damned abracadabra!

TEIRESIAS:
 You were a great man once at solving riddles.

OEDIPUS:
 Mock me with that if you like; you will find it true.

TEIRESIAS:
 It was true enough. It brought about your ruin.

OEDIPUS:
 But if it saved this town?

TEIRESIAS:
 Boy, give me your hand.
 [To the PAGE:]

OEDIPUS:
 Yes, boy; lead him away.
 We can do nothing. Go; leave us in peace.
 —While you are here

TEIRESIAS:
 I will go when I have said what I have to say.
 How can you hurt me? And I tell you again:
 The man you have been looking for all this time,
 The damned man, the murderer of Laios,
 That man is in Thebes. To your mind he is foreign-
 born,
 But it will soon be shown that he is a Theban,
 A revelation that will fail to please.

A blind man,
 Who has his eyes now; a penniless man, who is rich
 now;
 And he will go tapping the strange earth with his staff
 To the children with whom he lives now he will be
 Brother and father—the very same; to her
 Who bore him, son and husband—the very same

24 OEDIPUS REX

Who came to his father's bed, wet with his father's blood.

Enough. Go think that over.
If later you find error in what I have said,
You may say that I have no skill in prophecy.
[Exit TEIRESIAS, led by his PAGE. OEDIPUS
goes into the palace.]

☞ ODE I

CHORUS:

The Delphic stone of prophecies [STROPHE I
Remembers ancient regicide
And a still bloody hand.
That killer's hour of flight has come.
He must be stronger than riderless
Coursers of untiring wind,
For the son of Zeus armed with his father's thunder
Leaps in lightning after him;
And the Furies follow him, the sad Furies.

Holy Parnassos' peak of snow [ANTISTROPHE I

Flashes and blinds that secret man,
That all shall hunt him down:
Though he may roam the forest shade
Like a bull gone wild from pasture
To tinge through glooms of stone.
Doom comes down on him; flight will not avail him;
For the world's heart calls him desolate,
And the immortal Furies follow, for ever follow.

But now a wilder thing is heard [STROPHE 2
From the old man skilled at hearing Fate in the wing-
beat of a bird.

Bewildered as a blown bird, my soul hovers and can not find

Foothold in this debate, or any reason or rest of mind.
But no man ever brought—none can bring
Proof of strife between Thebes' royal house,
Labdakos' line, and the son of Polybos,
And never until now has any man brought word
Of Laios' dark death staining Oedipus the King.

Divine Zeus and Apollo hold [ANTISTROPHE 2
Perfect intelligence alone of all tales ever told;
And well though this diviner works, he works in his
own night;

No man can judge that rough unknown or trust in
second sight,

For wisdom changes hands among the wise.
Shall I believe my great lord criminal
At a raging word that a blind old man let fall?
I saw him, when the carrion woman faced him of
old,

Prove his heroic mind! These evil words are lies.

☞ SCENE II

CREON:

Men of Thebes:
I am told that heavy accusations
Have been brought against me by King Oedipus.

I am not the kind of man to bear this tamely.

If in these present difficulties
He holds me accountable for any harm to him
Through anything I have said or done—why, then,
I do not value life in this dishonor.

It is not as though this rumor touched upon
Some private indiscretion. The matter is grave.
The fact is that I am being called disloyal
To the State, to my fellow citizens, to my friends.

CHORAGOS:

He may have spoken in anger, not from his mind.

CREON:

But did you not hear him say I was the one
Who seduced the old prophet into lying?

CHORAGOS:

The thing was said; I do not know how seriously.

CREON:

But you were watching him! Were his eyes steady?
Did he look like a man in his right mind?

CHORAGOS:

I do not know.
I can not judge the behavior of great men.
But here is the King himself.

[Enter OEDIPUS

OEDIPUS:

So you dared come back.

Why? How brazen of you to come to my house,
You murderer!

Do you think I do not know
That you plotted to kill me, plotted to steal my
throne?

Tell me, in God's name: am I coward, a fool,
That you should dream you could accomplish this?
A fool who could not see your slippery game?
A coward, not to fight back when I saw it?
You are the fool, Creon, are you not? Hoping

Without support or friends to get a throne?
Thrones may be won or bought: you could do neither.

CREON:

Now listen to me. You have talked; let me talk, too.
You can not judge unless you know the facts.

OEDIPUS:

You speak well: there is one fact; but I find it hard
To learn from the deadliest enemy I have.

CREON:

That above all I must dispute with you.

OEDIPUS:

That above all I will not hear you deny.

CREON:

If you think there is anything good in being stubborn
Against all reason, then I say you are wrong.

OEDIPUS:

If you think a man can sin against his own kind
And not be punished for it, I say you are mad.

CREON:

I agree. But tell me: what have I done to you?

OEDIPUS:

You advised me to send for that wizard, did you not?

CREON:

I did. I should do it again.

OEDIPUS:

Very well. Now tell me:
How long has it been since Laios—

